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# Shadows of the Mind

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## Chapter 1 by Jay Strider

"Are you ready?" I asked as we stood before the massive wall of Light.

He gave a nod, let out a shaky breath.

"...Yeah."

We had been partners for a long time; we'd been through so many adventures, all across the fantastic world of Arainia... You see, we were adventurers. We did a little of everything, from exploring to spying to bounty-hunting, and more.

But this was something we had never dreamed of doing.

At the edge of Arainia are walls of Light that spread from horizon to horizon, earth to heavens.

No one knows what happens when you go through. Some say you die, some say you live forever.

Some say you enter another world.

And some say it can't be done.

So, my partner, Regret, and I were giving the job of finding out.

We'd never backed down from a job before, and with a king's ransom in payment from the King of Arainia himself, how could we have said no?

Regret let out a nervous laugh, shaking his head.

"That's just us, huh, Virtue? Risking our very lives for gold."

I shrugged, trying to look indifferent; but he could see right through me. "We've done it before, what's so different about this time?"

I knew as well as he did what made this different.

We had no idea what we were getting ourselves into.

We both took huge breaths, and took a step forward.

I had no idea what I was getting myself into, but I was determined to find out.

We took another step forward.

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The Light was overwhelming. I realized that I didn't know what I was getting myself into.

I looked about, disoriented, and when that didn't help I wandered around for a minute. I hadn't taken ten steps to my left when I ran into a young man, about my age.

"Thank goodness," I said, coming up to him. "Could you tell me where I am?"

He shook his head sadly. "No... I'm lost as well."

"...Oh."

He shrugged. "We could find our ways together; I'm sure there's a village around here somewhere."

Nodding, I replied, "That sounds wonderful. ...By the way," I added, "My name is Virtue. What's yours?"

The stranger tipped his hat. "My name is Regret," he said, "It's a pleasure to meet you."

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